

# Nation

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# The costs of being tough

By Will Nicholls

Many members of the media and Canadians are talking about Canada's Bill C-25, a centerpiece of the Conservative government's tough-on-crime legislative agenda. This new law, which eliminates the "two-for-one" deal for time spent in custody before conviction, will help increase Canada's prison population. It's estimated that the government will spend about \$10 billion expanding prisons and enforcing stiffer penalties for lawbreakers.

Canada hasn't really had high crime rates that would promote imitating the American prison model. Indeed, Statistics Canada reported last week that crime rates here are as low as they've been for almost four decades, since 1973. The homicide rate is even lower, at a level not seen since 1966.

Even so, Canada will be spending huge sums to build more prison capacity while hiring many more people to staff the new units. Meanwhile, in the US, even Republicans are in supporting cheaper and more effective solutions targeted to the community programs.

A large majority of Members of Parliament voted for Bill C-25, it should be noted. After all you don't want to seem soft on crime, as it could be political suicide to do otherwise. Political capital means votes no matter whether the decision is a good one or not. Remember how gay marriage became one of the main campaign platforms in the US. Right or wrong doesn't mean anything in the political arena.

By adding more prison cells rather than programs that are proactive in deterring crime it creates a situation where crime can flourish. The costs to Canadians will be high. The latest figures from the Parliamentary Budget Office said the average cost of keeping a man in a maximum-security prison is around \$223,687 a year. The cost per female offender in maximum-security is much higher at \$343,810. Parliamentary Budget Officer Kevin Page said the new

prisons and additions to older prisons could end up costing Canadians from over \$4 to \$9.5 billion a year in 5 years.

Howard Sapers, Canada's Correctional Investigator, said there are already many problems even with the current prison system. Correctional Service of Canada has admitted they aren't able at time to deliver needed programs to inmates. Sapers said, "We're already seeing offenders not being prepared properly for release at their parole eligibility dates." It even extends to recruiting workers and the unfulfilled positions mean current employees are getting burnt out. He questioned government expectations of having more prisoners without having adequate resources.

Some Crees can attest to the current problems in prisons. The Nation has received complaints that in Quebec's provincial prisons programs are limited or non-existent for them. They blame both resources and the fact most programs, if offered, are only in French.

Given that almost 20 per cent of inmates are First Nation or Inuit one wonders if the proposed dismantling of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs would see some of their budget go towards Bill C-25.

It is certainly interesting to note that various programs such as the WapikoniMobile, a program that allowed Aboriginal youth in Quebec the opportunity to learn skills and make movies (450 to date) and Native Women's shelters have had their funding cut. Both of these examples are geared to preventing or assisting in alternatives to preying on or being a victim.

Given a chance to make educated and informed choices would you want to pay more or less taxes? Especially when you know spending less money than building more prisons is more effective. Yes, we all want to be tough on crime but I would rather stop it at the source. Not going to jail is better life choice and should be encouraged.

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photo by:  
Will Nicholls

# Making war movies the old-fashioned way

By Sonny Orr



As they emerge from the aircraft, the engines stilled and cooling off, they begin a mission of war. These men, whose task is widely publicized but narrowly understood, slowly work their way off the sand-whipped surface of the tarmac, shielding their weary eyes behind dark glasses. It doesn't work, as one of the team lacks the required eyewear, and the hours spent on the long flight from a secret headquarters in a seedy bar are betrayed by a pair of red-rimmed eyes.

Where does this scene take place? Afghanistan? Iraq? Somewhere in the volatile Middle East? No, somewhere in the middle north, actually. More precisely, about five degrees south of 60.

In Quebec, in other words. On a mission? Yes. So what are they up to exactly? Do tell! A few hearty slaps on my back reveals that it's none other than international jet setter Neil Diamond of Reel Injun fame, followed by Zacharia Kunuk and his main actor, the famous fast runner from Igloodik. They have popped up in Whapmajjuarapik (some day this twin town will merge into one) to start filming a documentary on the days of old.

Word quickly got around on Facebook, in mere seconds to be exact, that two worlds are about to collide in my universe, just as the film crew showed up at my doorstep and quietly filed into my kitchen. Quick greetings and faster gossip starts off the evening.

I immediately discover that they are in need of communications, actors, actresses and... tea. Tea aside, I warn them of the bears patrolling the town, terrorizing camp sites and the local university and that they were around just this early morning. One intrepid crew member reminds me that he's used to polar bears but then I retort that they can be seen easier in the dark, unlike the dark black bear of this area. Failing to get

a rise out of the filmmakers, I realize that they were most likely scheming all night at headquarters and must be tired by now.

The next morning, I get a call from one of the leaders, demanding the communications tools they required. I comply by handing over my coveted cell phone and secret phone number. Their plans gel into something concrete and the team gets to work. The secrecy morphs as propaganda pamphlets circulate around town, demanding informants and actors. Yes, the mission is to carry out the documentation of the old wars that Inuit and Cree used to partake in over the past centuries.

Now, FB is instantaneously full of wannabe actors clamouring for roles that involve killing or being killed. The wannabe actresses are excited, as everyone knows what happens to the women-folk when a village gets pillaged. The excitement grows as by day two the team has already neared their first objective, choosing the actresses. As for the actors' roles, the central prerequisite is an athletic build and abnormal stamina.

The team decides to move headquarters, quite similar to the old headquarters in downtown Montreal, with its proximity to the fabled night life of metropolitan Whapmajjuarapik, allowing the team to quietly scope out scenes and settings with the help of local intelligence.

In a frenzy of exhilaration while conducting reconnaissance for a shoot, however, they lock themselves out of their vehicle. Quickly, the communication device pops out and I (who can fix any situation and thus my hefty retainer) am called for professional assistance. I rapidly divine a solution and code in the valued intelligence. Hours later, the team calls back, everything fixed. I think to myself: self, this is only day two, and the mission will last weeks.... (to be continued).

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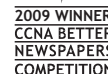
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# Arctic scholarship

news

## A Cree teen prepares to study Iceland, Greenland and Canada's Arctic during a life-changing journey

By Amy German

Mistissini's Kayleigh Spencer may only have just turned 15, but over the next few weeks she will be seeing more of the northern hemisphere than most members of her community will over the course of their lifetimes.

Spencer is about to embark on the Students on Ice Arctic Youth Expedition 2011, a 17-day whirlwind tour of the Arctic climates of Iceland and Greenland before moving on to the Labrador coast and, finally, Nunavik.

She won a prestigious, \$10,000 scholarship in a writing competition sponsored by the Stornoway Diamond Corporation that will enable her to join 75 international students and 45 scientists, educators, aboriginal elders, historians, artists, writers, innovators, leaders and polar experts on this epic journey.

Kayleigh is excited about what the trip could mean for her academic future. "It will help me a lot with my education as I am sure that it will help open doors for me when it comes to studying environment for the Cree nation," she said.

Being an environmentally conscious teen in Mistissini, Spencer is concerned about the future of the land and how people treat it. This is something that she has learned from her Cree Elders, particularly from her own Gookum.

Her father, Jeff Spencer said "The Students on Ice program is all about these annual trips to the Arctic region, but really, this is about saving the planet. The mission is to bring together future scientists and environmentalists."

The Students on Ice (SOI) team aims to connect students with the natural world, help them foster a new understanding and

respect for the planet and discover solutions to our most pressing challenges. Ultimately, SOI wants to inspire participants to make a difference.

These kids will have the opportunity for extraordinary wildlife encounters with whales, seals, polar bears, caribou and seabirds during their visits to remote Arctic communities. They'll also tour archeological sites and acquire first-hand knowledge and insight into the dynamics of climate change.

Indeed, according to her dad, the trip will involve a lot of hard work. Kayleigh will be conducting scientific experiments to help record the details of climate change. She will also have an additional 350 pages of materials to study prior to her July 23 departure from Toronto for Reykjavik, Iceland.

But he says it won't be all work and no play. Some of the fun highlights of the trip include visiting a geothermal spa in Iceland, various other ecotouristic locations as well as a tour of the island nation's Parliament house.

The delegation will also sail across the Denmark Strait from Iceland to Greenland, where the delegation will have an extraordinary opportunity to see rare Arctic marine life. From there it is on to the fjords of Greenland for more exploration.

Then the delegation will return to Canadian soil beginning with KANGIDLUSUK Base Camp in Labrador and on to several locations throughout Labrador. Finally, they will visit Nunavik before ending the journey in Ottawa August 7.

Her community and family fully support her incredible adventure. Cree businesses and entities such



Mistissini's Kayleigh Spencer

as Eskan, CREECO and even the local Caisse-Populaire have stepped in to help cover the family's contributions (about \$5,000) for specialized clothing and equipment for the trip.

Kayleigh's immediate concerns are about missing her three siblings while away on her voyage. She also wonders how she'll fall asleep at night during the almost 24 hours of daylight in some of the regions she will be visiting.

The experience will only reinforce the values Kayleigh already holds dear. She is particularly upset by a nearby uranium mine project that could be developed despite fierce Cree opposition.

"The environment is very important to me," she says, "because not a lot of people are being very careful about it. They don't spend much time thinking about the pollution they are creating, especially when it comes to industry."

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# Caribou crisis

news

## The CRA/GCC raises alarm over huge population decline

By Amy German

The spreading fear that the once-massive caribou herds of the North are in catastrophic decline has been dramatically confirmed by recent Quebec government statistics that show a key caribou herd dwindling away.

Quebec's ministry of natural resources and wildlife has released numbers that indicate the important George River caribou herd now numbers (as of 2010) only about 75,000, down more than 80 per cent from its estimated population of 385,000 in 2001.

Now the Grand Council of the Crees / Cree Regional Authority are studying potential avenues to reverse the trend.

"The Cree representatives and the Aboriginal representatives on the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Committee in the north have always been concerned in regards to the amount of caribou that are declining in the north," observes Deputy Grand Chief Ashley Iserhoff.

The committee, including Cree, Inuit and Naskapi representatives, is discussing this issue with both federal and provincial government agencies.

The impact of sport hunters is a chief concern, said Iserhoff. "It has always been an issue when we speak to the ministers and even the premier."

While the Cree do not harvest from the George River herd, as their calving ground is located around the eastern portion of Ungava Bay, from where they migrate down into Naskapi and Inuit territory, it is feared that the trend may be similar for the Leaf River herd within Cree territory.

The Leaf River herd has their calving grounds on the western side of Ungava Bay and then migrates south to Eeyou Istchee.

It was estimated about a decade ago that the herd numbered approxi-



mately 600,000 but new data is not yet available. A survey is being conducted over the course of this summer.

"The best estimate that we have is that there has been about a 15 per cent annual decline and so that would mean that there are most likely between 200,000 and 300,000 caribou left within the Leaf River herd," said Nadia Saganash, who is following the caribou file at the CRA.

As for what is causing the decline, Saganash said some Cree Elders believe there is a natural cycle in each of the populations and right now we are in the down slope of the cycle.

Other factors such as hunting for sustenance, sports hunting, parasites and food availability are pressures that can also impact a herd.

Because of this, Quebec's Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife, Serge Simard, is implementing precautionary measures for the upcoming 2011-2012 hunting season. Simard is imposing a 75 per cent reduction in the number of permits granted to sport hunters in zone 22 A, from 2000 permits to 500. Various other zones will also see permit reductions. As well, the government will limit hunters to one zone and a maximum of two caribou.

Nadia Saganash said that the Crees would like to see the permits reduced even beyond this however as there is a great deal of concern over the herds but that Quebec has been hesitant to give the go ahead on this, mainly out of concern for the losses to industry.

She said the CRA objective is to stabilize the population "so that it continues to thrive for the benefit of the hunt and to also help the populations recover faster." The Crees and Quebec have not been able to find a consensus on this matter, however.

"The second issue that we were faced with is apathy on the information regarding the harvest levels – not everybody is reporting their kills. I think that the population needs to be made aware as to exactly how important it is to report on the harvest levels," said Saganash.

Saganash said that the CRA is hopeful that Quebec's new measures for the upcoming hunting season help to alleviate not just stresses on the herds but also aggravations within the Cree nation when it comes to caribou hunting.

There have been many complaints, particularly along the coast, that Cree hunters have not even been able to get out hunting due to the prevalence of sport hunters and what some view as reckless behaviour. This includes dangerous firearm use and also the dismemberment of caribou for trophies along the highways near Chisasibi while leaving carcasses behind that attract other wildlife.

"I think that the government is taking the issue more seriously and I think that it was an important signal from them to take this issue seriously. I hope that they pay attention to what the hunters and trappers have said they are experiencing," said Iserhoff.



## Feds call a wrap on Wapikoni Mobile

They may have had eight successful years training First Nations youth in film and video production training in communities throughout Quebec, but that hasn't stopped the Conservative government from shouting "cut!" at Wapikoni Mobile.

The federal Human Resources Ministry pulled a crucial \$490,000 in annual funding for the cutting-edge organization last week. Now Wapikoni Mobile will be forced to park their three mobile video production units for the rest of the summer, leaving several First Nations communities with gaps in their summer planning for youth.

Despite more than 450 film and video projects made by Aboriginal youth from many of Quebec's most impoverished communities, the federal government has said that they would rather see the funding go to projects that had better employment creation prospects.

"This project addressed what is likely the poorest communities in Canada, where they had the highest unemployment and suicide rates and so this doesn't make sense at all to cut there. If you call yourselves Human Resources Canada, you are supposed to invest where the difficulties are the worst to help people get over those numerous problems that keep them in unemployment and poverty and that is exactly where they have chose to cut," said Andre Dudemaine of Montreal's Terre en Vue festival.

## Thunder Bay Coroner's inquest for Reggie Bushie slated to Go Ahead

While the issue of Aboriginal representation on juries has stalled a number of trials and inquests in Thunder Bay, the Ontario Coroner's office has announced that Reggie Bushie's inquest will proceed with preliminary hearings in late July.

Bushie, a Grade 9 student from the remote Poplar Hill First Nation, was

found dead in Thunder Bay's McIntyre River. He is one of seven First Nation youth of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) who has died in the last decade after being sent to Thunder Bay for secondary schooling because it wasn't available in his community.

More recently Jordan Wabasse, another NAN teen, was also found dead in the same area under similar circumstances.

Bushie's inquest has been on hold because of various issues within Thunder Bay's jury inquest system.

According to Howard Hampton, the New Democratic Party MPP for Kenora-Rainy River, it is likely that a special representative jury was put together for this specific inquest.

"I guess the only comment that I would make is that it is really sad that years have to go by and that the family and First Nations organizations have to take the Liberal government all the way to the Ontario Court of Appeal to try to get some semblance of justice," said Hampton.

## Harper named Honorary Chief of Blood Tribe

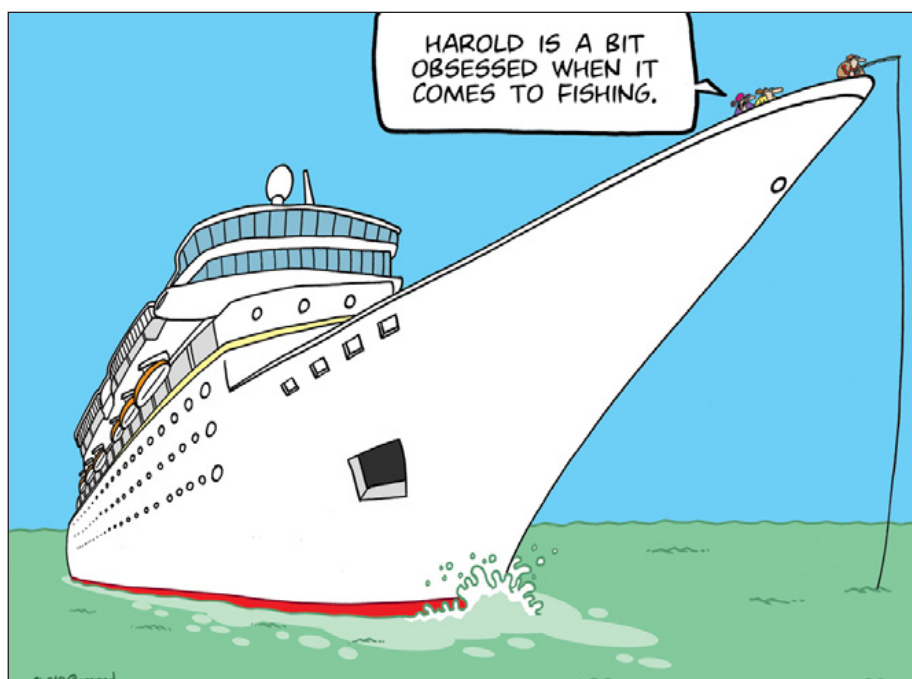
Prime Minister Stephen Harper was named an honorary Chief of Alberta's Blood Tribe First Nation July 11. Dubbed "Chief Speaker" for the occa-



Prime Minister Stephen Harper is named an Honorary Chief by the Blood Tribe First Nation of Alberta

sion, Harper donned a war bonnet and face paint for the special ceremony that has also been bestowed on Prince Charles and Pope John Paul II.

"I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to Chief Weasel Head and the Blood Tribe Council for bestowing on me this rare and profound honour. I would like to offer special thanks also to Elders Wayne Plume, Pete Standing Alone and Melissa Whitegrass and to all those who have contributed to this magnificent ritual. To be a member of the Kainai Chieftainship is to become part of a great tradition," said the Prime Minister.



PMO photo by Deb Ransom

Comic strip courtesy of Tundra Comics: www.tundracomics.com



*"Antlers and bones of all sorts of varieties had been hollowed into paw prints and different animal forms to be worn as different pendants. The designs were unique and ideal as a meaningful gift to anyone special."*

## Kahnawake's 21st pow wow

### History comes alive in a kaleidoscope of colour and movement

Written by Amy German Photos by Will Nicholls

As a spectacle, the Kahnawake pow wow is hard to beat.

While hundreds thronged together in their traditional gear of jingle dresses, headdresses, feathers, beads and tribal paint to compete in one of Quebec's largest traditional pow wows, thousands more arrived from far and wide to experience the annual exhibition of performance, history and artistry.

The focus of the event was certainly the visceral sea of colour and rhythmic movement powered by endless chants and hypnotic traditional drums.

But the sumptuous aromas emanating from the many traditional food vendors then completely overwhelmed the senses of this visitor. As the strawberry juice was being slung from every corner, the barbecuing of deer, moose, smoked goose and caribou sausage beckoned hordes to line up for their taste of the traditional fare despite the burning 30-plus-degree heat of the day. With so many incredible delights and delicacies to sample, choosing between a buffalo burger and a basket of deep fried wall-eye or sturgeon bite size munchies became an incredibly difficult decision within the first five minutes of arriving.

Running through the weekend of July 9-10, one of the biggest draws to this festival, outside of the incredible array of Native competitive dancing and music, is

that there is so much fresh and incredible local fare concentrated in one southern setting. For example, at no other time of the year do the local Quebec strawberries taste as sweet and intense or smell as fragrant.

At the same time, the Kahnawake Powwow is also one of the largest merchant-driven pow wows in Quebec, attracting hundreds of vendors from across Canada and the US.

One local vendor was Michalee Lazore, the owner of a soap and natural cosmetic company called Sequoia. She was just setting up shop when the Nation caught up with her on a beautiful Saturday morning.

"Things are going well as usual here," Lazore enthused with a big smile. "We are very excited about the good weather as that really brings the people here. We have worked hard on our setup and it's all been put together and we have been made a few sales already!"

Lazore was offering up loads of red clover, sweetgrass, and strawberry-scented products as well as a series of products inspired by legends.

Having worked the pow wow circuit for years, Lazore said that it's a wonderful opportunity for her business as she is able to reconnect with the hundreds of clients that she only sees at sort of event.





"One guy who came up to us was so funny because he said 'Hi, it's me. I am the one that buys the soaps.' And all I can think is yep, that is about everyone that comes by," said Lazore with a grin.

A few booths down was Ken Ratte, also known as Laughing Crow, who said he had spent over 1000 hours on the pow wow trail last year as a vendor going from event to event.

"Right now I live in Rimouski but I am originally from the Prairies, from a reserve called Broken Head," said Laughing Crow.

"I have been coming here to this pow wow as a habit for about 10 years and before that I went annually to the one in Kahnawake out near Oka. This is what I do for a living, it is my livelihood."

Underneath his tent, Laughing Crow offered a wide variety of goods, including dream catchers, necklaces and drums – what he described as the typical fare. Much of it had been made by him or his wife and showed remarkable quality. Spending so much time on the road throughout Quebec and Ontario, Laughing Crow will likely be at the next pow wow you visit.

Not too far down the rows of vendors was Randy Roy of the Manitoulan Island M'Chigeeng First Nation.

What made Roy's goods stand out among the rest were his incredible

sweatshirts. Not only were they made from a material derived from bamboo, but his black hoodies all featured Ojibwa midland art done in reds, blues, yellows and greens. The vibrancy of the designs on the sturdy yet soft black material gave them an almost animated quality.

"Visiting from Manitoulan and coming here, there are some clans that we are not familiar with such as the snipe and the beaver clans, neither are very common where we come from, but we try to accommodate these clans a little bit with the designs," said Roy.

Travelling the festival grounds, eventually we were happy to meet Trish Diabo, an artist originally from

Kahnawake but who has since moved to Long Island, NY.

Diabo's booth was a true find with its displays of fascinating works of art. Her medium of choice is the gourd, upon which she had painted an original series of Native-themed designs.

"These gourds become like pieces of wood after the cure. You can embellish these any way that you choose to with turquoise stones, Native themes and so fourth," Diabo explained.

From tiny painted beads to small, lightweight gourds intended as Christmas ornaments and then onto larger items that were fashioned into home décor items and birdfeeders,



# Agreement for the Elders in the Cree Communities

## Submission of projects

A *Specific Agreement on "Adapting Regional Services and Infrastructures in Order to Improve Living Conditions of Seniors"* in the Cree Regional Authority, Nord-du-Québec region 2008-2013" was concluded between the Cree Regional Authority (CRA) and the Québec Government in 2008.

The Agreement envisages a financial aid for eligible organizations who wish to develop and set up activities, projects, infrastructures and innovative services in bond with the general objectives of the Agreement.

## The general objectives of the Agreement are to:

- enable government, municipal (Band Councils and MRC), regional, university, association and community partners to identify common objectives and projects aimed at improving the contribution of the elderly in their communities;
- contribute to the creation and implementation of projects aimed at improving the living conditions of the elderly;
- foster the social participation of the elderly in local and regional community development;
- promote the benefit and social inclusion of elders by providing a voice for the Elders in Eeyou Ischtee;

## The specific objectives of the Agreement are to:

- provide vision, leadership and guidance to the Cree elders;
- provide advice and information on Cree traditional knowledge, cultural and values;
- assist to educate the youth about Cree language, culture and traditions;
- hold Annual meetings to address their needs and concerns expressed by the Elders to the Cree leadership;
- strengthen unity among Cree elders of Eeyou Ischtee;
- foster issues concerning the quality of life, health, social and cultural of the Cree elders;
- realise the role of elders as a creative and active resource for the Cree communities;

## Application can be submitted at anytime.

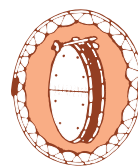
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Diabo had some remarkable works that left a lasting impression. Some even made it home with us.

What stood out most to our little pow wow delegation, however, was the Why Knot Wood & What Knots table with its unique series of dream catchers that spun in the centre of wooden animal sculptures.

"For the dream catchers in wood, I use cherry, wengay, yellow heart (Brazil), aromatic and cedar woods to make the dream catchers, mainly because they are colourful," said the artisan Wesley Havill of his process. "Imported woods sometimes have much brighter colours than what we have here."

What most caught our eye was a sunshine-shaped carving from yellow heart-wood with an intricately woven dream catcher in the centre.

We were also taken a back by the stunning antler carvings that Havill had for sale, all made into jewellery. Antlers and bones of all sorts of varieties had been hollowed into paw prints and different animal forms to be worn as different pendants. The designs were unique and ideal as a meaningful gift to anyone special.

To see more of Havill's works, visit [www.whatknots.ca/](http://www.whatknots.ca/)

Not everybody there to just make a profit. Nakuset, Executive Director of the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, was on hand to raise aware-

ness for the shelter and a handful of projects the organization is overseeing. The items for sale at her booth were crafted by the women living at the shelter during their personal journeys of healing.

In that many of the shelter's clientele arrive without a means of generating income, making crafts, blankets and soaps is a means for these women to gain skills and self-esteem while raising funds and awareness for the organization that is providing them with a new chance at life.

"They also end up teaching each other new skills and so when they were making this blanket they all sat with others who were learning how to make them and it was a good opportunity. I kept buying more and more yarn," said Nakuset.

While selling these goods, Nakuset was also handing out flyers with a representative from Batshaw Youth and Family Services as they agency is still very actively looking for Aboriginal foster parents to care for a large number of Aboriginal kids in the social services system.

While taking in a day of culture and Aboriginal pride, the shelter was also making the most of an incredible gathering of Aboriginal peoples enjoying their traditions.

For more information and the list of winners from this year's Kahnawake pow wow, visit [www.kahnawakepow-wow.com](http://www.kahnawakepow-wow.com)



# Aboriginal Sexual and Reproductive Health

## New information resource aims to reduce the wide gap in health outcomes

By Amy German

With infant mortality in First Nations communities reaching rates more than 13 times higher than the Canadian average, health professionals are sounding the alarm with practical solutions.

Geared at addressing the gaps in knowledge of sexual health services for Aboriginal populations in Canada, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada has created a website to fill in the blanks where other services leave off.

According to Society spokesperson Dr. Don Wilson of the Heiltsuk Nation in British Columbia, this new educational tool, which went live June 21 on National Aboriginal Day, isn't meant to replace services but rather enhance knowledge for those who need it.

"The inequities that exist in Aboriginal health in this country are well documented. Nobody has to dig very deep to recognize that there are some serious inequities when it comes to access to care and to information and that type of thing. There are geographic barriers, human resource barriers and a general lack of human resources," said Wilson.

Aboriginalsexualhealth.ca can not only provide health information in a space designed specifically for Aboriginals but it will also serve to support those working in the field of sexual health with Aboriginal peoples.

The SOGC works with a wide variety of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners such as the Assembly of First Nations, the National Aboriginal Health Organization, the Native Women's Association of Canada, the Canadian College of Family Physicians and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Canada. All of these organizations have come together on this project with the goal of improving overall Aboriginal health.

In particular, they hope to reduce the terrible infant mortality rate that is the norm in many First Nations communities.

According to the SOGC, the infant mortality rate in Canada is about one in every 1000 live births but, on reserve populations, that number goes up to 8 for every 1000 and then spikes again in regions such as Nunavut, where it is a tragic 13.5 infant deaths per 1000 live births.

"We wanted First Nations, Inuit and Métis people to have access to accurate, up-to-date medical information that can inform them before and after they have had encounters with health professionals so that they can expand their understanding and hopefully see some reduction in some of these health problems," said Wilson.

The site provides a wide base of information on all sorts of topics, from birth control to sexually transmitted infections (STI) to prenatal care. There is also a wide variety of information on healthy sexuality coming from some surprising sources.

While there are videos posted on the site from some Aboriginal sexual health teachers and programs highlighted from different First Nations, the SOGC also managed to involve Aboriginal celebrities in this project.

International film star Adam Beach helped out with a few video segments about healthy sexuality and relationships. He also talks about STIs in spots that are now running on the on the website.

While Wilson said the site is still in its "infancy" – the SOGC has plans to develop the site into something much larger – its present form is nonetheless a valuable source of relevant, accurate information for folks who may not otherwise have access to confidential advice on sensitive topics.

For example, said Wilson, youth living in a remote community still

face barriers when it comes to service delivery and information access even though the community may host a medical clinic.

"Maybe the community health representative in this tiny community would be a young girl's auntie or cousin or neighbour," he explained.

"If so, she goes to look for information from them or goes to the health centre and encounters them and says that she wants birth control or access to abortion or prenatal care; of course her confidentiality is very much in jeopardy," said Wilson.

While Wilson acknowledges that the site cannot replace medical care from a health professional, it can in many circumstances inform people about what care is available for the health challenges they are facing.

By also providing a great deal of information to new parents on pre and post natal care, Wilson said that there is hope that socioeconomically disadvantaged Native communities likely to experience higher rates of infant mortality may finally begin to reverse the statistics of tragedy. By getting educated with basic information about the vital necessity to, for example, put infants to sleep on their backs, or by learning about the deadly effects of cigarette smoke during pregnancy, people can avoid the major causes of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

"One of the founding visions for this website was to put knowledge back into the hands of Aboriginal people because knowledge is power and we have had that stripped away for so many years and generations. We have not been in charge of our own destinies. So, as Aboriginal people, I think it is important that we be equipped with knowledge," Wilson emphasized.

To visit the website, go to: [www.aboriginalsexualhealth.ca](http://www.aboriginalsexualhealth.ca)

# Mapping a path for troubled youth

## A new tool for youth risk assessment is a radical advance for social workers

By Amy German

Eeyou Istchee recently made another small but important step toward self-sufficiency with the certification of three Cree to teach a new youth risk-assessment process to social services workers in the north. The achievement has the potential to offer troubled youth greater access to resources adapted to their specific needs.

Justice of the Peace Louise Logue, a registered nurse and certified addictions counselor, has worked with a variety of justice departments and social service departments across Canada and the Cree Nation since 1985. Logue says the James Bay Cree now have a new

caught up in the judicial system. With this 44-question instrument, a worker can engage the youth in an interview to get a clear assessment of the young person's risk level and, consequently, what services may be helpful to improve future outcomes. The process is frequently used as an alternative to criminalization.

Logue gave the example of a youth caught shoplifting. Normally, the system's response would be for that youth to enter a shop/theft program in which they are taught that shoplifting is wrong and bad. However, if the youth's motivation for the crime was hunger, poverty, and/or neglect at home, this tool would help a social



Louise Logue, a justice of the peace, registered nurse and certified addictions counselor

"BY INTERVIEWING THE YOUNG PERSON YOU DISCOVER THAT MAYBE THAT THERE ARE ADDICTIONS IN THE FAMILY OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR CHILDHOOD ABANDONMENT OR NEGLECT."

way to get at-risk youth closer to the services they need.

"This is a risk-assessment tool, it is called the youth level of service inventory or the case management inventory YLS-CLI and, basically, it's a series of 44 questions that the counselor asks that can give you a picture of what the need for service areas are," explained Logue.

The method was created by Dr. Robert Hoge, a psychology professor at Carleton University, and is currently being used in 14 different countries, including Canada and the US.

It's intended for those professionals working with cases of youth criminality or at-risk youth who have engaged in self-destructive behaviour such as drug or alcohol abuse or who have otherwise been

worker determine a more appropriate course of treatment.

"By interviewing the young person you discover that maybe that there are addictions in the family or domestic violence or childhood abandonment or neglect. It is not to say that there is [these situations], but it is to identify a reason for the behaviour and to help you get to the bottom of the criminal conduct," said Logue.

Logue added that the new system helps a social worker keep on track when a youth's particular circumstances might lead to a misdiagnosis.

She gave a hypothetical example of a worker having a personal history as a divorced mother, and dealing with a youth that exhibits abandonment issues in connection to a par-

ent. The social worker may experience what is called "emotional immersion," or sympathizing with that youth, while forgetting to ask about drug use, school issues or peer relationships.

"So this instrument forces the worker to ensure that they ask the questions that answer the four directions: logical, psychological, social and environmental," said Logue.

Over the last few months, three Crees, Gloria Blackned, Nancy Voyager and Helen Voyager have all been training with Logue to use the YLS-CLI system. After 200 hours of theory and practical training, Dr. Hoge has also certified all three as master trainers of this program.

"I find it really helpful because of the questions and an interview guide," said Helen Voyager, a regional youth protection worker. "Once we get a score from the tool we can actually see where the client needs help the most."

Voyager says the program will also develop statistics to help identify service delivery gaps for youth and families in the north. "Most of the programs that we have been using at youth healing services have been cut, but if we have evidence that we need these programs than we can find more resources for these youth."

# Big screen history

## Montreal's groundbreaking Native film festival sizzles during the summer heat

By Amy German & contributions from Christine Rigby

For over two decades now the Land insights, aka Terres en Vue, festival has performed noble service as Quebec's premier Aboriginal cultural event of the year. It consistently assembles the best of Aboriginal dance, music, visual arts and cinema for a mainstream audience.

This year's festival will once again stage a groundbreaking film and video competition during the August 2-9 event. With a wide selection of feature length, short, documentary and animated films from across the globe to choose from, the Nation shares here a selected sampling in order to provide readers a foretaste of what promises to be a film gourmet's delight.



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### Smokin' Fish

By Amy German

In this 82-minute documentary by Luke Griswold-Tergis and Cory Mann, an Alaskan Tlingit man (Griswold) abandons his home and business in Juneau for the season to travel north on a traditional pilgrimage to smoke fish in his family's ancient camp.

Once there, the film illustrates the history and traditional culture of the Tlingit people via the vital relationship with their most prized traditional food – smoked salmon. The mood takes a turn for the sombre with the retelling of how this people was decimated by smallpox, ultimately declining from a population of 10,000 to less than 800 today.

This film isn't just a man smoking fish with his family but is also a global exploration of identity and culture as lived by Griswold and his clan. A truly heart-warming and endearing piece of cinema; by the closing credits you will feel like a member of the family.

### Columbus Day Legacy

By Amy German



Navaho filmmaker Bennie Klain's half-hour documentary on the celebrations of Columbus Day in Denver, Colorado, presents two diametrically opposed opinions on whether or not the city should legitimately continue celebrating the historically suspect tale of Christopher Columbus's discovery of America.

On one side is the city's Italian community, which uses the occasion as a day of cultural pride and to celebration of the contributions of Italian Americans who once struggled on the margins of American society.

On the other side, members of the city's Native population and, especially, a core of American Indian Movement activists, demand that the event be renamed to recognize the brutal slaughter that followed the moment of contact symbolized by Columbus.

At times disturbing, Klain's film manages to fairly represent both sides of with precision and empathy, leaving the viewer just as torn as those in Denver.

### Contact

By Amy German

This 78-minute feature documentary from filmmakers Bentley Dean and Martin Butler transports viewers back to 1964 and a painful yet representative moment of Aborigine history: the rocket test launches by the Australian government in the



outback, smack dab in the middle of Martu territory.

Before then, the territory's indigenous Martu had yet to make contact with those they would come to know as the "whitefella."

This tragic yet gripping account is told through the eyes of three siblings, two girls and their younger brother, all of whom were captured by the Australian Native Welfare



Patrol on original film footage in 1964.

Decades later, as the siblings revisit their ancestral home and recount what it was like to have their first encounter with the whitefella, there are unexpected humorous glimpses about their first

impressions of space exploration and "rock coming to life."

While this film is balanced by these warm, light-hearted moments, the tragedy of colonization is fully aired as the Martu are suddenly rounded up for relocation to a refugee camp while their traditional home is brutally expropriated by the national government.

## Children of the Amazon

By Christine Rigby

Fifteen years after she first photographed the children of the Negorote and Surui tribes in the Amazon, as well as the colonizing rubber tappers and their families, documentary filmmaker Denise Zmekhol returned to examine the changes that have taken place since her visit.

A powerful and emotional film, this documentary uncovers the devastating environmental and social consequences that have resulted from farming and logging in the Amazon forest.

Through a series of intimate interviews and beautiful cinematography, Zmekhol shows us that in this short time the social lives and environment of the tribes and rubber tappers has changed significantly. No longer secluded, almost always in danger of losing their land to loggers and farmers, and having

already lost most of their culture and tradition, the film explores a fate that is not uncommon to most of the world's indigenous populations.

## Lenin en Maracaibo

By Christine Rigby



A variation on the Romeo and Juliet theme, this fiction film shot in documentary style explores the conflict between Marxist-Leninist communism and the traditional communitarianism of the indigenous Wayuu people of Venezuela.

Using non-actors to play themselves, the film follows the lives of Carlos, a revolutionary and a playboy raised by a white family, and Yaritza, a Wayuu teacher and day-care provider who moonlights as a maid for a white family.

The two characters are introduced early on and begin to form a bond when Yaritza brings Carlos to her village to see first hand why the

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This contest is sponsored by the Nation, Beesum Communications and SolHuma. Good luck to all residents of the James Bay Cree communities!

**Contest closes August 19th, 2011 so enter today!**

Winner will be notified by email. Must be 18 years old and over to enter. Prize will be shipped to the airport of the winner's community where it will be held for pick-up.

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# Will on the GRILL

by Will Nicholls

## Vital Cooking!

Much to my shame and chagrin, it's been far too long since I have pushed the limit in the kitchen. There have been good meals, to be sure, but I haven't really been cooking, if you know what I mean. Certainly not enough to write home about, much less for *the Nation*.

Until now. I recently availed myself of an opportunity to try out the "Vital Stove." This great leap forward in the evolution of heating meat is one that would be useful for any Cree travelling on the land, be it for fishing, camping, trapping or other activities.

Small and compact, it can be powered by any flammable material. Some fools have gone so far as to employ dried dung (dung, no.2, rabbit pellets, etc.) and even made a cookbook based on this method. But I don't recommend this

method. After all, Eeyou Istchee has far more firewood than rabbit shit.

I took the stove home along with a container of apple wood (for smoking). This stove can act as a stove, BBQ or smoker as needed. I used Solhuma's fire starter to begin with as this was produced by persons with limitations and gives them a job as well as a good product.

I was impressed. Yes, you can boil water and cook with a frying pan. But it is the barbecue and smoker abilities that impressed the hell out of me. You don't get the same amount of wait time to start cooking with the Vital Stove as coals used in a regular barbecue.

I started off by cooking Tandoori chicken. The chicken legs were slashed and marinated in a Tandoori marinade overnight prior to cooking. There is a recipe below for homemade but you can

get a package or readymade paste if you don't have 15 or so minutes to spare.

Each time I turned the chicken I would coat the top of the chicken legs with the leftover marinade until it was all gone.

Next up were the Bison Burgers à la Will. The recipe for these delectable beauties is below. I've never seen burgers disappear as fast as these ones. I was lucky to get my hands on one. I barbecued those babies first then followed up with a 30 minutes of apple wood smoking. Instead of the traditional round patties, I made thin rectangles so I could use a baguette rather than a bun. Yum, yum, yum with my favourite toppings.

My next use of the Vital Stove was to prepare a tried-and-true rib eye steak marinade called the Mexican BBQ rub. No real recipe here as I used a store-bought jar of the rub. I found it easy to do the steaks just right on the stove as you would on a barbecue.

All in all, the Vital Stove surpassed my expectations. I would fully recommend it to anyone who is in the bush or on the lake. It would make shore lunches a snap and safer during times of high risk for forest fires.

My only problem was the clean up when I did all three recipes one after another on the same day. This was deliberate to see what would happen under extreme conditions. It didn't fail but a mixture of Tandoori, BBQ sauce and fat did take a little muscle power to scrape off.

But overall I heartily recommend the Vital Stove as a truly interesting and useful tool for any human being heading to the great outdoors or city balcony or park.



## Tandoori Marinade

This recipe can be used for more than chicken. You can add it to other meats and even fish. I haven't tried it with duck, goose, moose, caribou or other wild game.... yet. If someone beats me to the punch please let me know what the results are. You can cook the spices for added flavour but it's okay to just mix and use.

Don't just take my word for it: I talked to the local butcher and saw him make the Tandoori marinade paste. That insider view has helped me cut down the amounts, which means a family could make it too. Thanks to the staff from BK grocery store on Jean Talon Street for their assistance.

- 1/4 cup onion, pureed
- 3 cloves garlic, minced or garlic pressed
- 2 teaspoons fresh ginger, minced
- 1/2 cup cilantro, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons cumin powder
- 1-2 teaspoons cayenne or red pepper
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon salt
- the juice of 1 lemon
- 1 1/2 cups plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon tomato puree or tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

If cooking:

Heat the oil in a pan. Add pureed onion, minced garlic, and ginger. Cook for 1-2 minutes.

Add spices (except cilantro) and cook for another 2 minutes. If mixture seems too dry, add in 1 or 2 tablespoons of water. The result should be paste-like.

Remove pot from heat and add lemon juice, yogurt, salt, cilantro, and tomato paste. Mix well. Allow the mixture to cool to room temperature before using as marinade.



## Bison Burgers a la Will

2 pounds ground bison (can substitute caribou or moose... beef if you can't hunt worth a damn!)

1/2 cup red onion chopped small (Spanish is acceptable)

1/4 cup ketchup

1 teaspoon soy sauce

a pinch of sage (pinch means taking it between your fingers in a pinch)

a pinch of savoury

1 tablespoon of honey (clover or flower if possible)

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

optional: 5 drops of mesquite liquid smoke (can substitute hickory if desired)

Mix last six or seven ingredients well then blend into meat and onions. Let set for one hour.

Make mixture into patties, squares or rectangles.

Cook to desired doneness. The smoking is optional if you don't have a Vital Stove.

Hoped you enjoyed the return of Will On The Grill. Send me a note if you want more and I'll see what's cooking and share it with you. I hope you'll return the flavour!.

## Refining the historical record

In his detailed narrative of the events leading up to and encompassing the historical meeting in a schoolroom in Mistissini in June 1971 ["Remembering 1971," volume 18, No. 17], Mr. La Rusic shares with the reader his personal experiences based on the detailed field notes and recordings he made at the time. Having studied anthropology, I am aware of the value of such historical record keeping in recreating events that, given other circumstances, would simply slip into the rich oral tradition of storytelling.

Understanding how specific narratives are created – be it from field notes or stitched together from the memories of people involved in past events – allows viewers/readers to critically evaluate what is being told, why, and how. To support the transparency of the process of making this series, as well as to encourage future retellings and adaptations of the story, all of the interviews (transcripts) and footage filmed during the making of the four-part documentary series, *The Eeyouch of Eeyou Istchee* will be available to current and future generations of Crees.

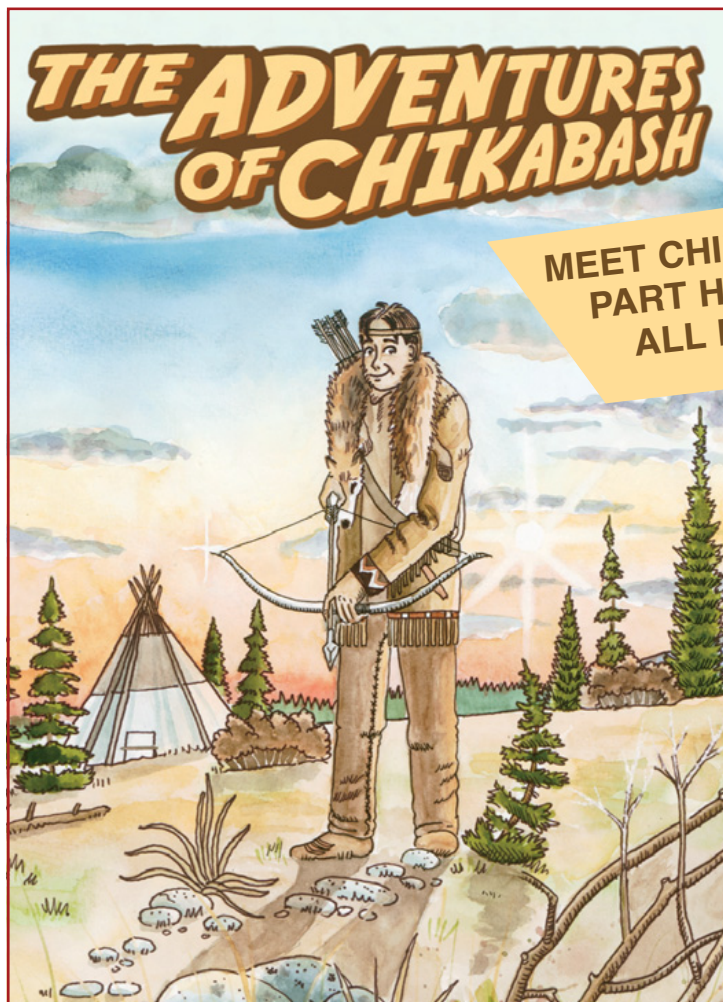
As Mr. La Rusic points out, "Every generation of Crees will have to retell and adapt the story of their past to meet the needs of their particular historical and cultural and social situation." Unfortunately, despite being invited numerous times, Mr. La Rusic declined to share his experiences and perspectives of these events. In the process of critiquing this film, however, he has shared his wonderful account of a key moment in Cree history. Perhaps, in the end, that is the most important function that a series like this can engender.

"Together We Stand Firm" is the first episode in what will be a four-part series on the JBNQA and the subsequent fight to have it implemented. The apparent success of the signed agreement was not the end of the story. Like the numbered treaties, the JBNQA could have fallen into ruin with its promises unfulfilled by governments or twisted by so-called implementation agreements until they no longer made any sense.

Hopefully, this exchange will encourage other people to share their memories and perspectives of these events.

Franziska von Rosen

Director, *The Eeyouch of Eeyou Istchee*  
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# Hydlo and FRIENDS

unplugged



## **Luke:**

*What are all those signs in the diversion bays for?*

## **Réal:**

*To show the fish the way!*



*Hydlo and Friends is a program broadcast by JBCCS. Its hosts, Luke and Réal, discuss various matters related to Hydro-Québec activities on Eeyou Istchee lands. Swapping their mike for a pen, they invite you to explore various aspects of the Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert project.*

## Mitigation measures: Land users at work!

The Eastmain-1-A/Sarcelle/Rupert project is almost over. As construction of the Eastmain-1-A and Sarcelle powerhouses draws near completion, tallymen are stepping up their efforts to mitigate the impacts of the project on their traplines. Seeding banks, planting trees, putting up navigation signs, building portages, re-locating affected camps, blazing ATV trails and roads . . . There's no doubt about it, the tallymen will be busy all summer long.



Terry Mianscum, Paul Ryan Mianscum and Sydney John Matoush plant trees on trapline R-21.



## Marking channels in the diversion bays

In June, tallymen from Mistissini and Nemaska put up some 300 signs in the diversion bays to help everyone learn to use and get around the new environment.

## Seeding the Rivière Rupert and worksites

Aerial and hydraulic seeding of the Rupert's banks and worksites including sand pits, quarries and borrow pits was done in July by specialized firms. Nine tallyman and their crews will mechanically seed another 53 ha. Work began in early July and should be finished by mid-August.



▲ Aerial seeding



Hydraulic seeding ►



Mechanical seeding ▲



Sydney John Matoush

## Tree planting

The tallymen and their crews will also have planted over 1.5 million green alders and poplars by the end of August. Thirteen tallymen will be making worksites and workcamps green again.



Kenny Jolly, R-21 tallyman, being interviewed

## Meet Alfred!

Luke and Réal welcome a new recruit! Alfred Wapachee of Mistissini will be interviewing Cree workers in the workcamps where Crees are taking part in environmental studies. The interviews will be aired on Hydlo & Friends. Speak out, speak loud and don't be shy!



## UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

### Parlez-vous Ininimowin?

by Xavier Kataquapit

**R**ecently, I have been spending a lot of time in Northern Quebec. The change in scenery is very enjoyable. I have met many great people and I have made a few new friends.

There is something wonderful about crossing the Quebec border from northern Ontario. I always feel more like I am driving into France from some non-French-speaking European country. I have done that a couple of times. Although the border is only a few hours away from just about anywhere in North-eastern Ontario it seems as though I have travelled to another country when I reach Quebec.

Of course I am still trying to find my way with the French language. Although I have met many great people, I feel I have had to try their patience when it comes to communicating at the most basic level. I speak only a few words in French and understand a tiny bit more in order to follow a simple conversation. Thankfully, les Quebecois are very accommodating when I try to speak their language and I fall short. They help out.

It is not a new feeling for me to be lost in a foreign culture. You see, English was once like that for me. I had to deal with the same situation when I was teenager in Timmins and attending high school. Back then, of course I knew and understood English but I seldom spoke the language. I had spent my early elementary school education learning the basics of English from the age of five or so. At home we always spoke Cree.

Although I was always considered outgoing and bright back in Attawapiskat, I found myself in my first year of high school in Timmins as silent as a mute because I was too shy to say anything. I knew and understood everything being said around me. However, I had never practised how to properly pronounce the words or to carry on a conversation in a completely fluent way. Much of the time I was afraid to make a mistake and I and my Cree friends felt somehow less than perfect in this new and very competitive world.

I met many wonderful people and I am so thankful for all the help and support they gave me. The problem is that I

moved locations and of course schools several times during my teens and that made everything more difficult. My life seemed so temporary. By the time I finished high school, I still felt very uncomfortable with the English language. Strangely enough I found myself better able to express myself in the written word rather than the spoken word. I felt more comfortable writing because I did not need to speak aloud and I also had time to think about the words I needed to express. Cree people at the best of times are generally shy and quiet.

Cree is my first language and it was the way I communicated with everyone I knew for much of the first decade of my life. Everyone in Attawapiskat spoke Cree back then and it was abnormal or even strange for us to hear any of our relations or friends speaking in English. I always enjoy being able to speak with friends and relatives in my Cree language. Our culture is built on fun and much of the time, a simple word or phrase can present the silliest images that will set us off giggling and laughing. Take for instance Ka-peh-shi-shin-chen O-pah-nah-chee-sah, which basically translates as “his plaid pants”. It’s a practical description in English but a silly image to describe in Cree that can set us off in fits of laughter. Usually the phrase will lead to talking about a memory or event that involves someone’s plaid pants. To non-Cree people this seems completely ridiculous but that is a matter of culture.

You can claim that you have a good command of a language when you can tell a joke and understand a joke. It has taken me plenty of trial and error to find the proper humour in the English culture. I still try to mix my Native humour into conversations with my non-Native friends. Most of these efforts end with my friends wondering what I find so funny while I laugh to myself in my Cree frame of mind.

In the French culture, I have found that the best communication that I have been able to share has been laughter. Laughing and having a bit of fun with others seems to be something the Cree and French cultures share. Considering it has taken me more than 25 years to learn the English language I am trying to be patient as I commence à parler français.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## BIRTHDAYS

Johnny Albert Mianscum will be turning 18 on July 24th, 2011 @ 5:30 a.m. The sun was just rising the moment you were born; no matter how old you may be I will always remember the moment we shared as a mother & son. I love you babes! You're my shining star, aim far and you'll touch the stars. Happy birthday my son. Love, Mom & Family. xxxxx

I wanted to send 6 beautiful butterfly kisses to my baby Jacob Alex Blacksmith on June 22nd, 2011. Happy 6th birthday babieth! We love you! Love, Mom. xxxxx

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Where to get help: bilingual, anonymous, confidential and free phone services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Missing Children's Network:** They'll help

you find kids who have run away or disappeared.  
514-843-4333.

**Kid's Help Phone Line:**  
1-800-668-6868  
(www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**Youth helpline:**  
1-800-263-2266  
(www.teljeunes.com)

**Parent helpline:**  
1-800-361-5085  
(www.parenthelpline.ca)

**Drugs: help and reference:**  
1-800-265-2626

(www.droque-aiderreference.qc.ca)

**Gambling: help and reference:**  
1-800-265-2626  
(www.info-reference.qc.ca)

**S.O.S. Conjugal Violence:**  
1-800-363-9010  
(www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

**Health and Sexuality resources center:**  
1-888-855-7432 (Monday



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to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm)  
([www.criss.org](http://www.criss.org))

## Gay Helpline:

1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

## The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal:

1-866-403-4688.  
([www.nwsm.info](http://www.nwsm.info))

## Suicide Action Québec:

1-866-277-3553

## Residential School Survivors:

A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: <http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources.html>

## CLASSIFIEDS ARE FREE FOR EVERYONE

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### How to get your info to us :

By Fax : 514-278-9914

By email:

[Beesum@beesum-communications.com](mailto:Beesum@beesum-communications.com)

On the web go to:

[www.nationnews.ca](http://www.nationnews.ca)

and click on "Place a classified"

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